



Butcher Queers

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**The Renaissance will
not be Televised**

Our third instalment of *Butcher Queers* is long, long overdue. We thought the whole zine was lost due to a computer malfunction late last year, but we managed to save the lost data.

So much has changed since the last issue. We have witnessed an economic meltdown, spiralling unemployment and a growing sense of public unease. However, threats also present opportunities – people become resourceful, more creative and imaginations flourish.

And who better to lead the way than the talented homosexual? You could even argue that us queers are at the beginning of our own Renaissance, a new shift in political interest, rejection of stereotypes and dissatisfaction with a limited commercial gay scene that needs shaking up.

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Will
Curator



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NO RESPECT

NO RESPECT is an artist-led group based in Dublin who organise art, exhibitions and publications that are probably queer.

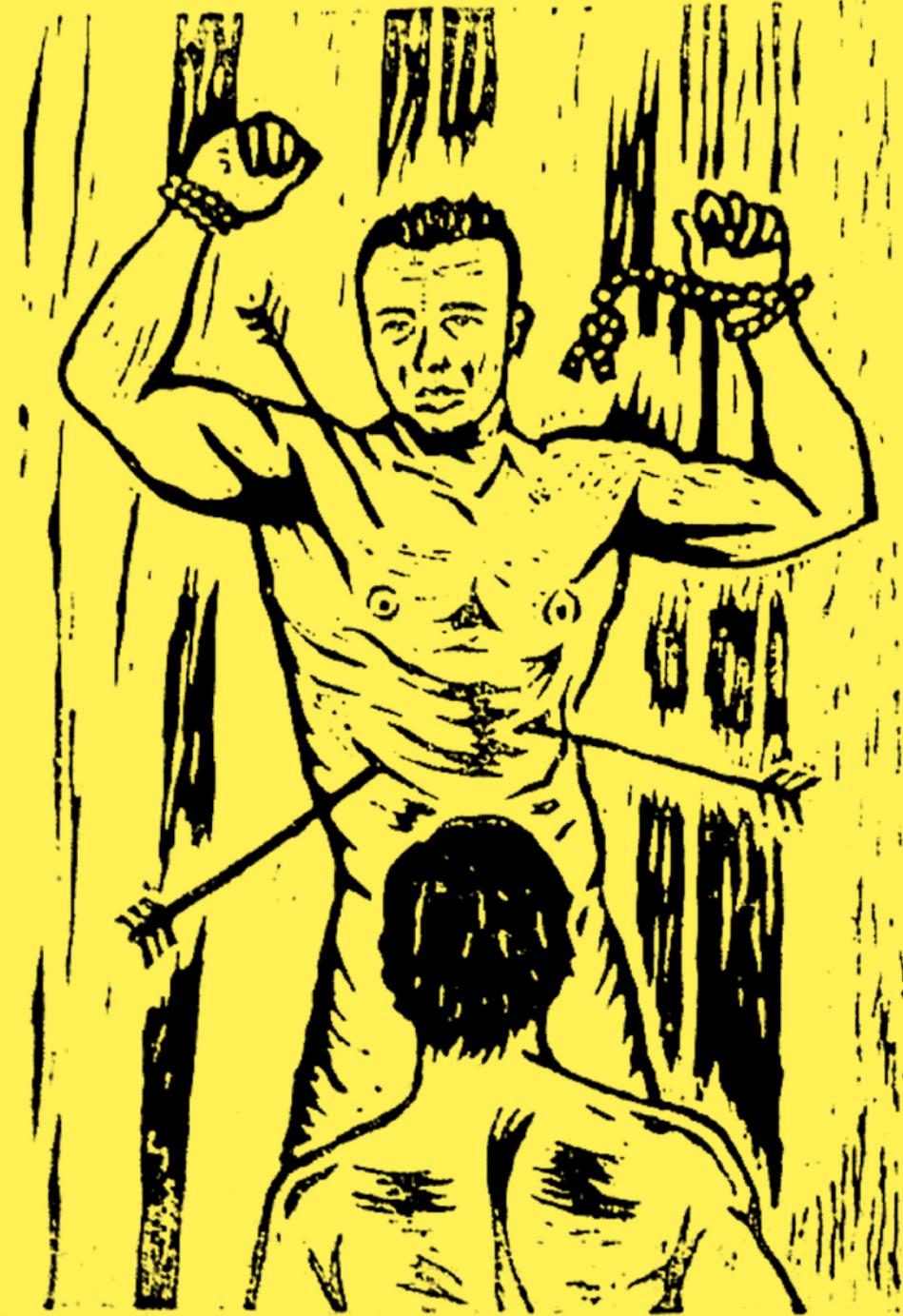
Contributors this issue: Peter Fingleton, Una Rocks, Fionn Kidney, Daithí O'Reilly, Sean McCormack, Tag, Caroline Cambell, Benjamin, Will St Leger.

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Front cover: *Black Block Brando* by Will St Leger.

**Missed an issue of *Butcher Queers*?
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Above: 'St Sebastian Pray for Us'. Lino print by Tag

After
the
Flux

the
Fallout?

by Una Rocks

Left eye: David Bowie

Hair: Marilyn Monroe

Right eye: Amy Winehouse

Patch: Pink Triangle

Padlock: Sid Vicious

Badge: Che Guevara

We're all waiting for the black President to come and give us that huge motivational speech right before the aliens attack. But we have the black President now. Hmm. Instead, 2010 should be the fallout after the flux. There will be no speech. There will be no aliens. We've been so busy this decade that we've forgot that it is now gone. While it's only really useful to the producers of *Reeling In The Years* to categorise time in chunks of decades,

it does feel as though the bookends of a massive terrorist attack and an even bigger economic crash have brought the rampant flux of noughties to a close. It has flashed past, like a super sped up montage of smoking buildings, cocaine, thousands of shiny vacant apartments, war, a giant wave, all such a weird ironic mirror of the 90s, a decade which is also hard to define, so much so that the 90s are now the main reference point in music and fashion, the twin pillars of youth culture.

Because virtually everything has now been democratised; communication, business, music, nightlife and movements, with the most instrumental moments being created in an accidental entrepreneurial spirit, trust in all authority and therefore leadership, from politics to finance to religion is all but eroded in Irish society. The fallout, and the potential to mould that into something positive will have come from ourselves.

"DIY is over, this is about Do It Ourselves. Never before have so many educated, creative and skilled people been unemployed in this country."

This year, has felt even more accelerated than others. For a while, it felt as though for the first time for this gay generation in Dublin, there was a critical mass of creative queers hanging around. A momentary stall in emigration (there was nowhere else to go, everywhere else was fucked too) drew people back into thinking of creating in their home city, as opposed to outsourcing their energy to London or New York or elsewhere. Things happened, things really happened. People got fed up of the monopoly of Capital Bars – now themselves in grave financial peril thanks to overstretching and a failure to adapt – and built their own scene. At the pinnacle, Seomra Spraoi, an autonomous space hosted a Queer Ball, with a donation at the door and a bring your own booze policy, the exact opposite of what the gay scene had become. It was a refreshing burst out of the druggy, consumerist, vain and commercial yelps from George's Street, now all these gays were drinking Buckfast off Mountjoy Square.

But in a way, a time for celebrating that scene which bred club nights and collaboration is over. A streak of competition creeps in when everyone realises that yes, you too can do whatever you want, you don't have to just be a spectator in a scene. But participation doesn't have to be competitive. And being seen to be doing something, as opposed to just being

seen, isn't enough if what you're doing has no substance. Anyone can create and be heralded as a creative inventor, but unless there are purposeful ideas behind such creation, then it's just Lady Gaga shit. She's not creating art, she's wearing a fucking hair bow for the sake of wearing a hair bow.

Now that the creative nightlife infrastructure is in place to keep us entertained (why do the gays always fix the entertainment bit first? Oh, yeah, because that's the most fun bit, duh) without having to dance to some bullshit many people aren't interested in, and the documenters are in place to capture a moment in time that would otherwise just shift past, what do we do now?

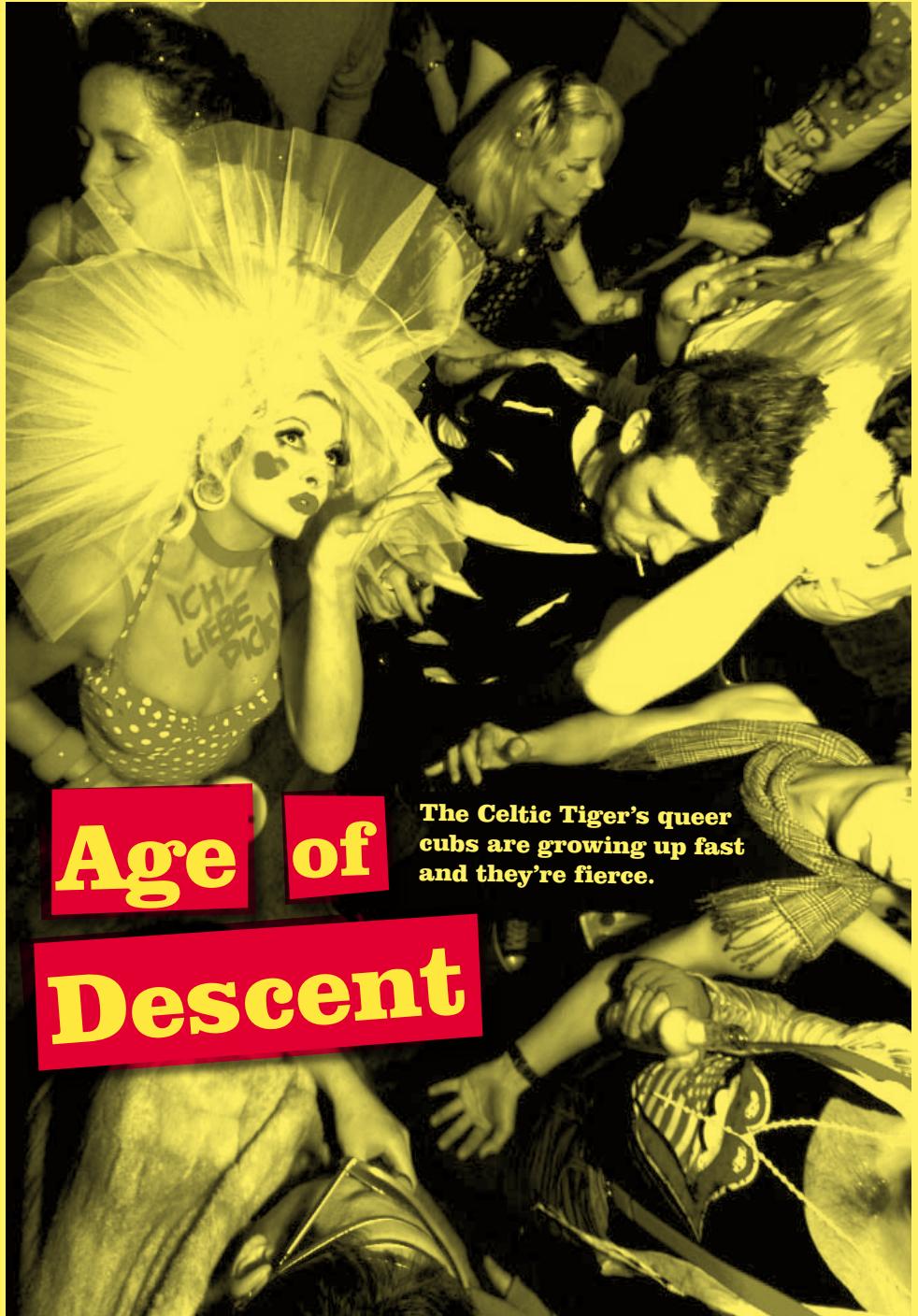
DIY is over, this is about Do It Ourselves. Never before have so many educated, creative and skilled people been unemployed in this country. And never before have the people who are meant to be in charge of fixing things and progression, i.e. the Government, been so incompetent. So it's up to us. And the gays are generally at the forefront of creative enterprises and communication.

The communication thing is interesting, we seem to be able to harness and dominate new forms of communication at an early stage, simply because we want to find each other. Gaydar was Facebook in 1999 when Mark Zuckerberg was in short pants. We have the tools, and although the purpose is quite muddy at the moment, the fallout should be harnessed to fix, create, and adapt failed enterprises into changed ones or functioning ones. Dead space into new space, ideas in a conversation into a business. It's about communication, creation and collaboration. This is not a revolution, this is a Renaissance. We are already spearheading the greatest civil rights movement of the century, the yearning for gay marriage. This will happen, and is happening, and it's happening with our own personal drive. Think about what could happen if we opened our minds to enterprises outside traditional 'gay issues'.

Flux is confusing, and fallouts can be paralysing, but creativity is an unlimited resource. Let's tap that shit. **BQ**

This article was written during a conversation with Una Mullally, Daithi O'Reilly and Fionn Kidney.

Right: 'Queer Ball' photomontage by Will St Leger



Age of Descent

The Celtic Tiger's queer cubs are growing up fast and they're fierce.

Above: Mimi Rouge (centre) hits up another night on the floor of Partie Monster. Photo by Fionn Kidney

There's something brewing in Dublin's queerland, a new wave of confident queers are carving out a new sense of identity and taking ownership of social spaces. More and more of the 'gay scene' seems to be happening on the fringes. *Butcher Queers* has been following some of the people who are creating new ideas and transgressive events.

Partie Monster @ Rí-Rá

words by Mimi Rouge

BQ: What the fuck is Partie Monster?

Mimi: Whatever the fuck you want it to be!

BQ: What made you think people would bother their arse dressing up every month?

Mimi: I didn't think they would but I wanted to dress up every month and it's all about Mimi.

BQ: Tell us a Partie Monster story.

Mimi: I got really hammered at Burton Monster. Rí-Rá normally let us play music till 3am, at 2.30 the music suddenly stopped mid-song. So I got up on top of the DJ booth and got the crowd to start shouting 'wankers' at the management for turning us off. Then, I stormed into the office demanding to know why they turned off the music to which they replied "we didn't". It turned out we blew a fuse. I then slipped and fell on a broken glass and cut myself in front of manager.

BQ: Has club culture changed in the past year?

Mimi: No, it was full of dopes last year and now there's just more of them (myself included).

When: Once a month **Where:** Rí-Rá, Dame Court

Time: 11pm till late **Cost:** €5 before 11.30pm - €10 after

SoundCheck @ SPY

Words by Una Rocks

BQ: Soundcheck, what's that?

Una: Fun, wreckless, polysexual, creative, indie-disco-electro night for winehounds.

BQ: Oh, I see. You have like a billion DJs each week, what the deal with that?

Una: We wanted to break the DJ monopoly and end DJ snobbery. Our shit is pretty democratic. Maybe a third of the people who play some tunes each week have never DJ'd before. They all go on to do more stuff—so much so that myself

and Fionn have started calling the night The SoundCheck School Of Djing.

BQ: You guys are always up to crazy shit, explain?

Una: SoundCheck is a creative outlet for our ideas. It's not just a club, it's a venue for random stuff to happen to entertain the crowd and ourselves throughout the night. We did a 'Death Mob' recently to kill flashmobs, which ended up being hundreds of people laying dead on South William Street blocking the traffic. Then we had everyone dress as zombies and chase each other down the street at Halloween. We've done some stuff like had a disco confessional limo with alternoaltar boys and dodgy priests. We've started showing *The Room* (best worst movie ever) every week in order to get Tommy Wiseau (the director) over to the club; we've had live sets from Ophelia, Easter Egg fights; we have a cupcake buffet every week, t-shirt making workshops; we make a zine every week; (**BQ:**) with club news and random stories, we have SingStar battles for an hour each week; we have awesome special guests, and people you've never heard before. For us it's not just a night to go out and get pissed, it's about music, ideas, film, community, creativity, and most of all FUN. Plus, we want to make as much shit as possible FREE. SPY are sound people to work with. We're like LET'S GET A BOUNCY CASTLE, and they're like 'sure'!

BQ: What's good about Dublin's nightlife?

Una: People are pretty friendly, I guess that's the best thing. But until these stupid fucking licensing laws are smashed it's not really 'night' life, it's more 'evening' life.

When: Every Thursday **Where:** SPY on South

Time: 7pm till late **Cost:** Free before 11pm, €5 after.

CAKE @ The Academy

words by Anna McCarthy

BQ: Why and who did you bake this CAKE for?

Anna: Six Dublin Pride volunteers wanted to give lesbians in Dublin more of a choice when it came to music and club nights. CAKE gives people who like their music alternative, indie, retro with a splash of pop, that choice. We also wanted to help the community given the tough economic times. That's why ALL the proceeds from CAKE go directly to Dublin Pride. We need more volunteers



Above: SoundCheck's 'Death Mob' brings South William street to a standstill. Photo by Fionn Kidney



Left: Here comes 'Trioblóid' @ SoundCheck. Photo by Fionn Kidney



Right: Ciarán Rua and Alice Kain @ áit AIT. Photo by Peter Fingleton

by the way! Your Pride needs you so check their website to sign up! dublinpride.ie

BQ: What makes a mainly lesbian-based club night different from say, The George?

Anna: We felt it was important to have a choice of nights for women, not just in music terms. In the other clubs that would have mostly guys it can be hard to meet other girls. CAKE gives girls a night where they can meet lots of girls and have great time with their guy friends too! CAKE also likes to do things a little differently with our themed nights and other events.

BQ: What other things happen at CAKE?

Anna: We've had various artistic goings on in our 'OVEN' space. Will St Leger did some fab UV stenciling for us. Colm Molloy from Urban Eye Care displayed his gorgeous fashion dolls. We also hosted the launch party of the Pink Calendar, Ireland's first Lesbian Calendar, the proceeds of which go to Belongto and LGBT Noise.

When: 2nd Saturday of the month **Where:** Academy, Middle Abbey St **Time:** 10.30pm till late **Cost:** €10, €8 Conc

áit AIT @ Pantibar (basement)

words by Ciarán Rua

BQ: Describle áit AIT in 10 words or less, we haven't got all day.

Ciarán: Absurd, Original, Fun, Ridiculous, Eclectic, Random, Delightful, Sophisticated and Queer!

BQ: How did it come about?

Ciarán: It all began when myself and my friend Mags (who originally organised the night with me) came back from London where we'd been living. We realised, upon returning, that one of the reasons we had left Dublin was because the queer scene wasn't quite as diverse as we would have liked. We had enjoyed socialising in Dublin for many years but we found our choices somewhat limited and it didn't necessarily suit our particular tastes. We therefore decided to set up our own night and hence áit AIT began!

BQ: Why makes áit AIT different from any other ten-a-penny queer night?

Ciarán: I suppose áit AIT is different because of the people involved in organising it. I always try

to incorporate what appeals to me into the night and as time has gone by, everyone who has been involved has done the same. The most obvious way that makes itself manifest is the music. There's not really one standard genre of music we have always played.

Initially, our DJ was a friend, Lorna, who particularly liked soul; then our two friends, Alice and Jeff came along to DJ and added their own twist. Afterward, myself and Mags decided to give the decks a shot, Mags having her own particular taste in music and mine being questionable to say the least!

Recently, my boyfriend Stephen, who is particularly obsessed with swing also joined in along with other friends, Peter and Áine. I suppose I would hope that this would give the music an eclectic feel so it's not the same genre of music all evening or every evening. Having friends on board also gives the night a slightly D.I.Y. atmosphere in the decoration and other elements which we are particularly obsessed with, from confessional DJ boxes to holy stump cakes! I'd hope all this combined gives the night an unpretentious, somewhat chaotic feel and, of course, the whole darling affair is free!

BQ: What time to you think clubs should stay open 'til?

Ciarán: It's not something I feel particularly strongly about it but I suppose there shouldn't be any law dictating when clubs close, simply because it seems nonsensical.

When: Once a month **Where:** Pantibar, Capel Street **Time:** 10pm- till late **Cost:** FREE

WAR @ SPY

words by James O'Neill

BQ: Why did you declare WAR? Did you see what we did there...

James: To try reinvigorate the stale clubbing scene and reintegrate disconnected clubbers

BQ: Pics from WAR look fuckin' mental, is it?

James: It's totally nuts! People get to rip off their clothes and writhe on top of each other and we've had naked people on speakers. It's a place where people can literally be whatever they feel they can be and do whatever they want. It's amazing what a flash of war paint can do...

>>>

BQ: Seems like a polysexual club night. Are younger people over that gay/straight shit now?

James: Yes, I think so. I grew up in a period of ghettoisation and it wasn't till I arrived in East London that I saw that it doesn't have to, nor need to be like that. Polysexual clubbing is really something that I wanted to create. I think we've all moved on from the need to make big sweeping statements about our sexuality, which was previously done perhaps out of necessity. It's a great thing that all persuasions can get it on, on the same throbbing dancefloor.

BQ: Is pop music escapism for people in the Renaissance? (We don't use the word Recession)

James: Oh completely and that transcends into clubbing and fashion, obviously. No one wants to spend their money or time on droning pub rock that's going to bring them down- that's what our parents are for. Rather, we want to dance 'til dawn like disciples of Dionysus to some filthy, fizzing, pulsating dance pop. Thank god for that.

When: Every Friday **Where:** SPY, South William Street **Time:** 10pm-3am **Cost:** €5 before 12 - €10 after **BQ**



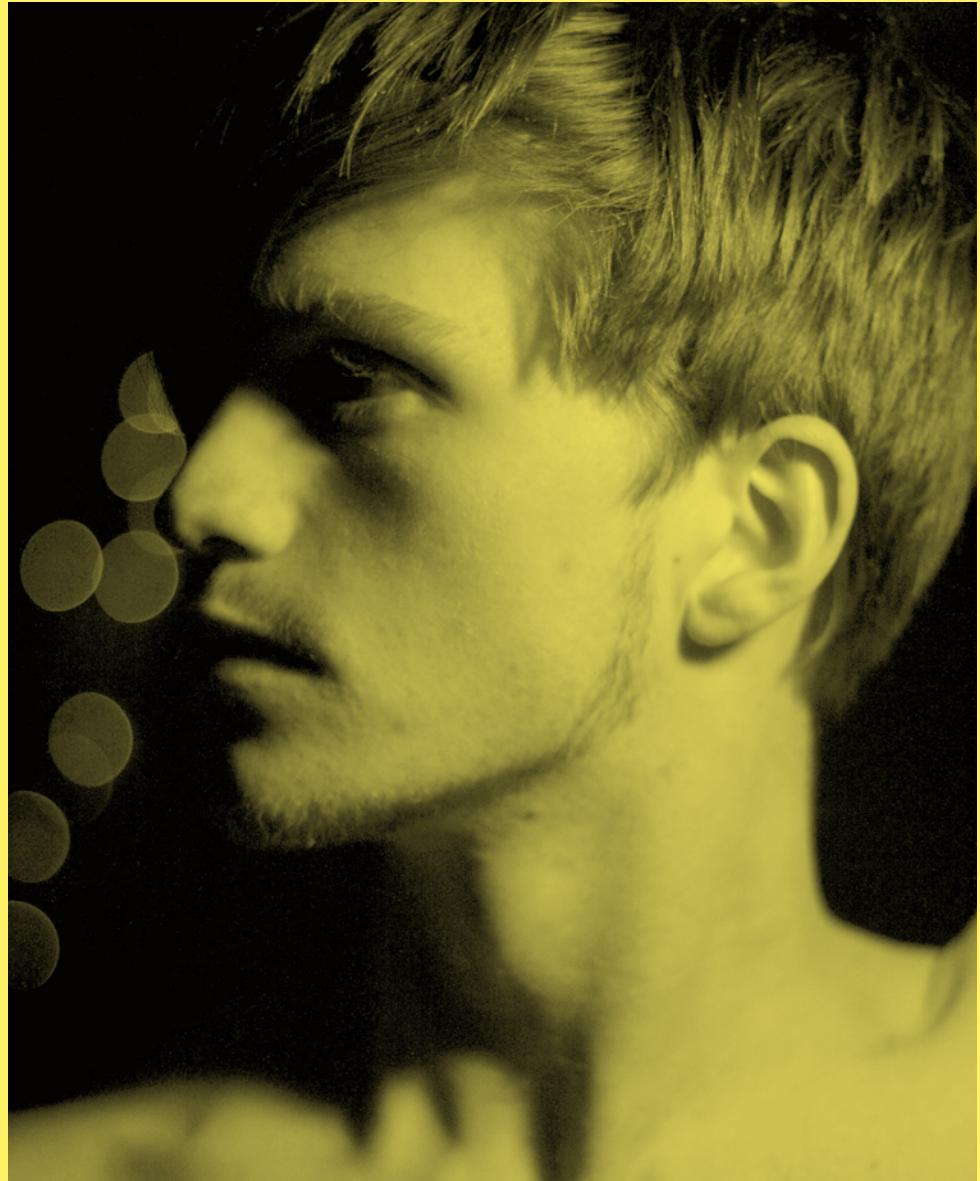
Above: James O'Neill @ WAR. Photo by Peter Fingleton



Above: Revellers @ WAR. Photo by Peter Fingleton



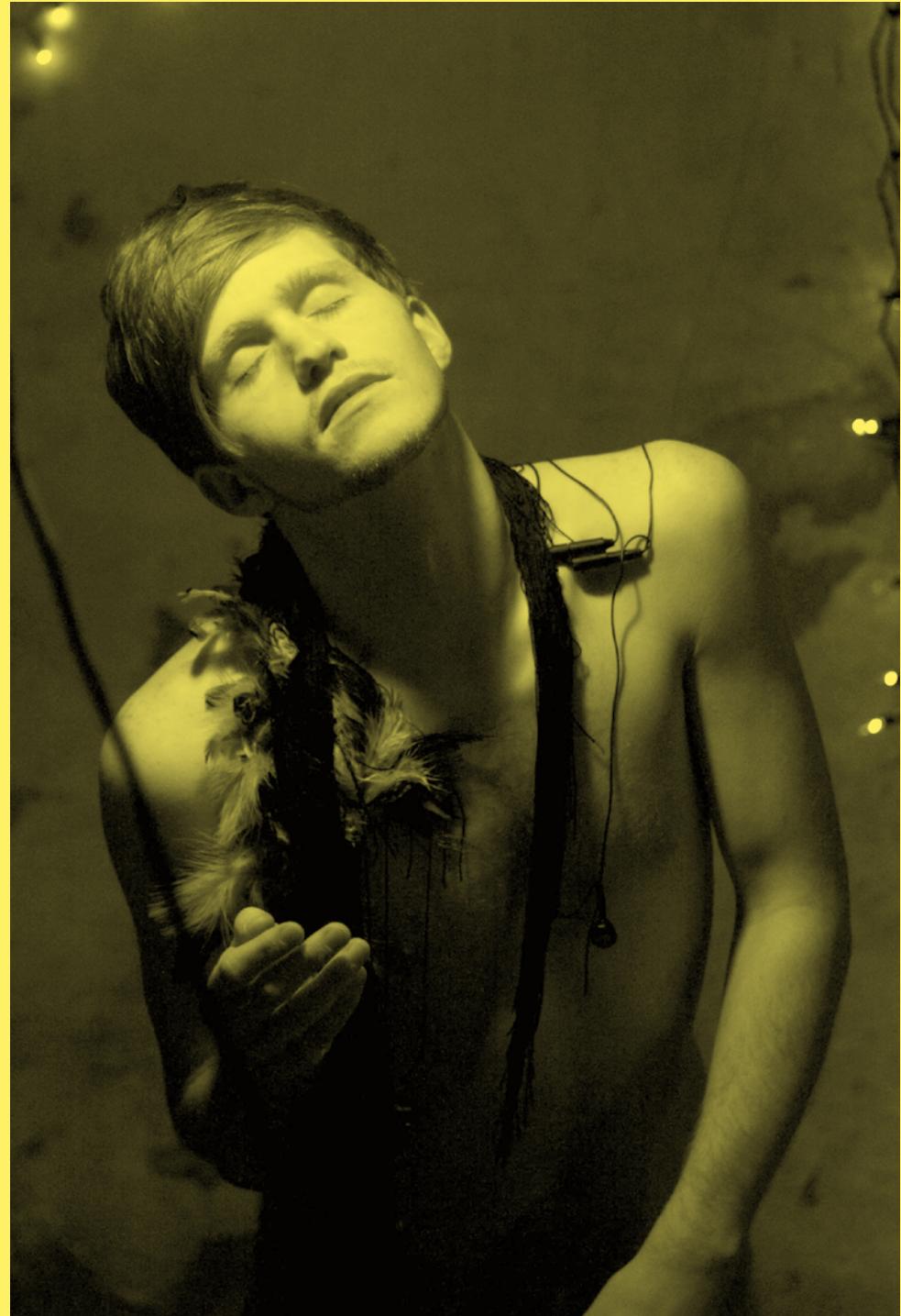
Above: Partie Monster. Photo by Fionn Kidney



Hatful of Harry

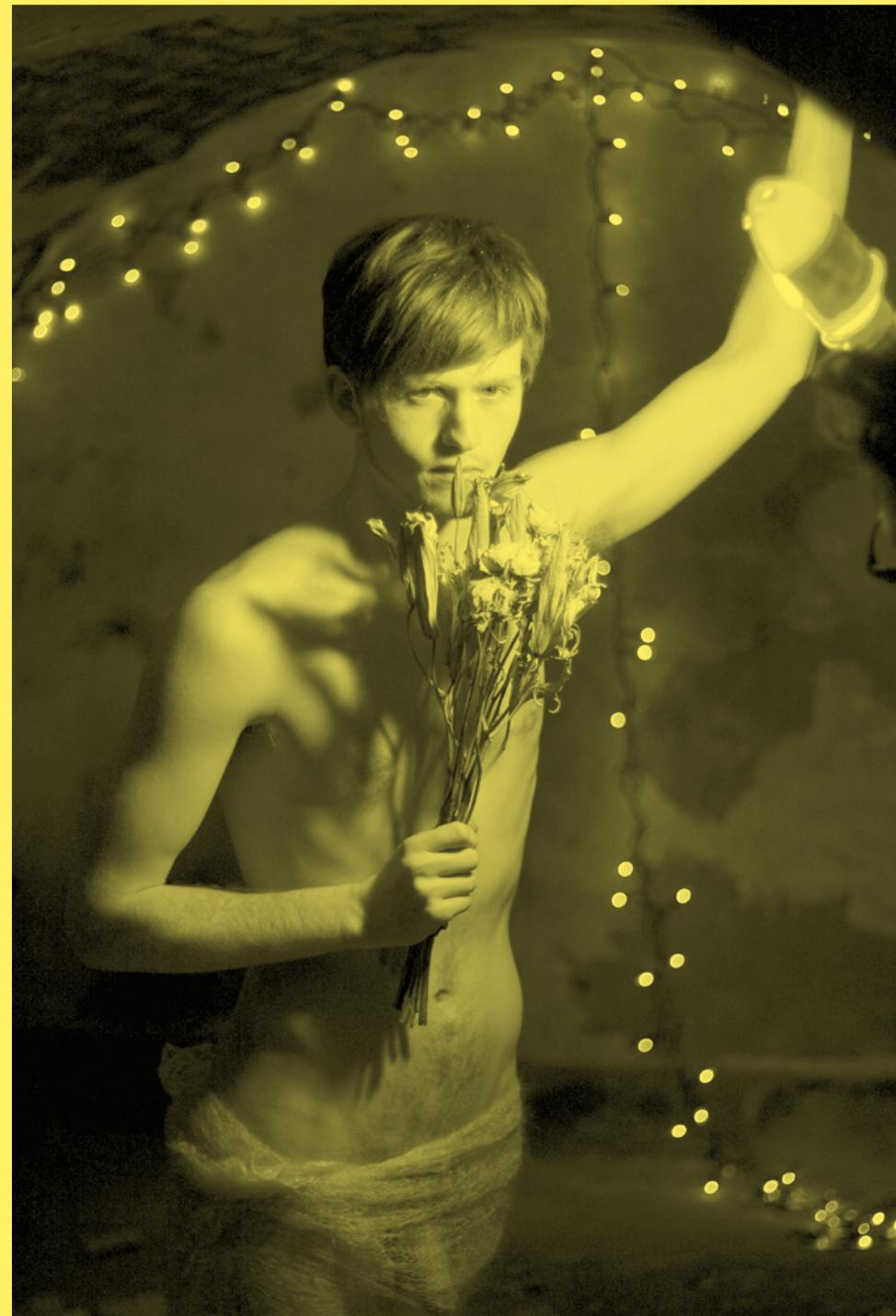
Photography: Fionn Kidney. Art Direction: Will St Leger

Butcher Queer: Harry Hutchinson, 22yrs from Waterford





Photography by Fionn Kidney





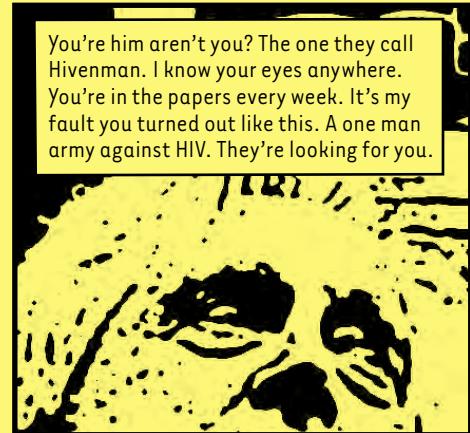
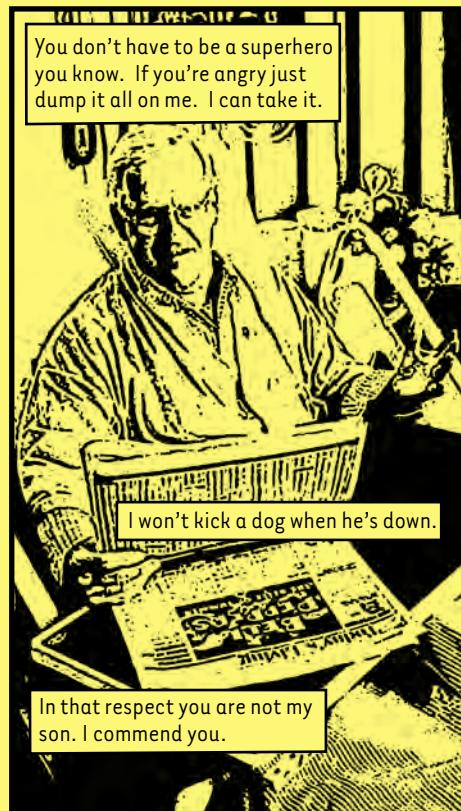
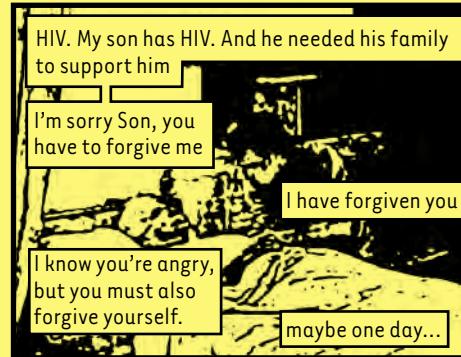
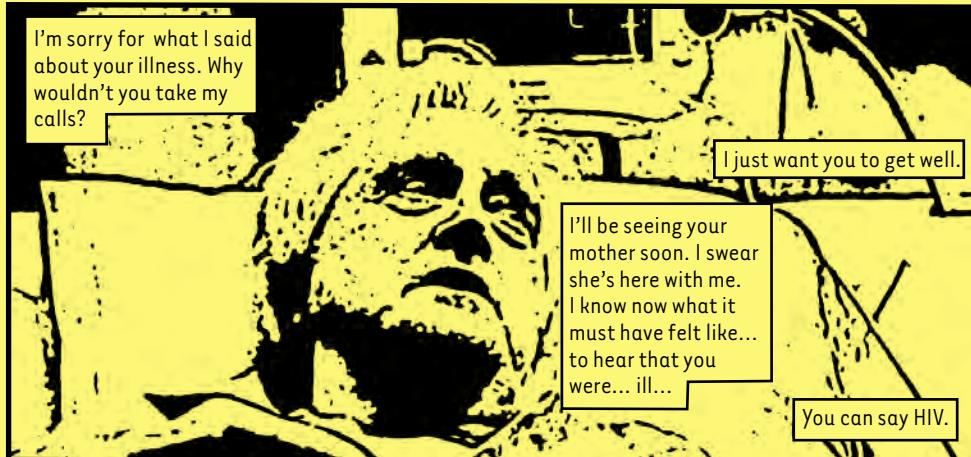
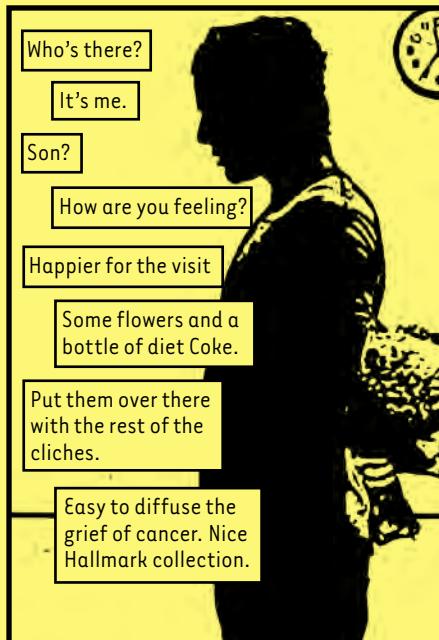
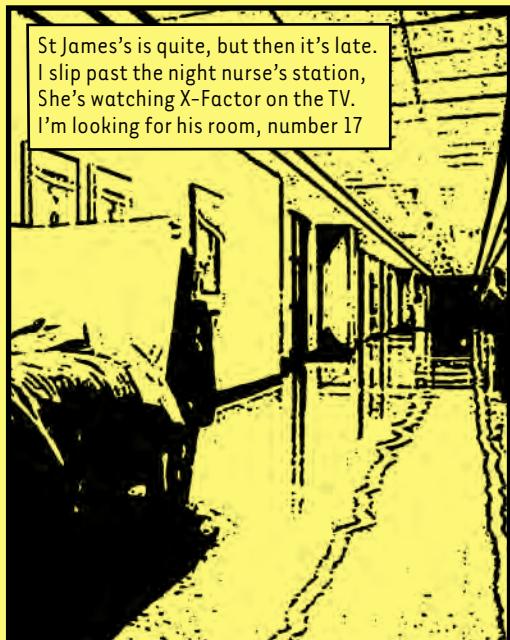
Photography by Fionn Kidney. Check out Fionn's work at cantleavenow.com

The Tales of

Hivenman +

Written by
Hivenman+

Illustrated by
Will St Leger





Above : 'Politics, Religion, Sex and Identity' by Will St Leger.

A sort of Homecoming

a story of identity
by Benjamin

That's Mary, her husband died a few months ago. Used to beat her. And that's her son John. Married, with two young lads. Alcoholic. Brendan, is the tea ready yet?

I'm prolonging my stay in the kitchen. Home for the weekend and half my neighbours are here. Mam showing them pictures of my brother's wedding.

'Now this is John's cousin, Greta... oh, yeah - beautiful girl. Married four years, can't have kids. Brendan there's cake in the press! Would ya believe I haven't a biscuit in the house! This is bride herself, doesn't she look great? She has a brother she doesn't talk to...

'Seeing anyone? Eh...well.... he keeps to himself, don't you Brendan?' My mother darts her eyes at me. First time she actually looks at me since I arrived. 'No', they say. 'Don't. Don't say it here, not now.'

'I'm really busy with work and everything, I hardly get a moment, I lie for her again. I cover up something that I'm not ashamed of, something that I want to tell the world about. I laugh it off, I flash them a smile and I die inside. Mam launches back into her quest to show how poorly the photos were taken, whilst telling everyone how my second cousin once removed on the other side has a bastard child.'

Retreating back to kitchen my phone is going off. 'out 2nite? xx', 'Hey mister, looking forward 2 later! Drinks @mine first'. I'm dying to get back to Dublin, to get the fuck away from this rejected life. Visiting my parents always gets me. Everyone thinking about the thing that no one will ever mention.

Two years since I came out to them. Their reaction was awful – tears, insults, tantrums – you'd swear they were the fucking queens. I remember my dad crying hard tears as I left. That was the end of it – I was gone from them forever. I became a 'was' to them; their child in past tense. Their son replaced by a gay man whose life was alien to them.

'Is it a crowd you've gotten in with or something?' my mother pleaded on the phone. 'Mam, please... just don't.' And so gradually she didn't. She never mentioned it again. Just a voice

on the phone, same words – different meanings. 'How is work?', 'How is the house?' No more open questions. No answers that could lead to what she tries to forget. Awkward visits home. Closeted queers parading round RTÉ, giving us our fucked up family hour.

"We don't talk about the fact that I'm gay. That I'm a big fucking queer."

And finally, my brother's wedding. He asked me if I wanted to bring a date. I didn't. I couldn't do that to the parents', I said. I love my sexuality – I revel in it. But my parents don't, and it's their day after all. Not mine. Not any more. Their day to put on the uniform, put on the smiles and lay the shit thick. Their first son getting married. Something that will never happen me. Civil Partnership? Yeah, right – they won't fall for that one. Old dears at the wedding, all smiles and buttoned down paisley:

'Any women in Dublin?'

'I bet all the girls are after ya!'

'Sure you'll be next Brendan!'

Go fuck yourselves. I wondered what my parents were saying when they got the same.

Mam's awkward laugh, Dad's stoney silence. But what can I do? Most of the time our relationship is good now – we talk about work, about family. We don't talk about my life – we don't talk about the fact that I'm gay. That I'm a big fucking queer. Sometimes all I want to do is tell them about my weekend, talk shite to them about life; tell them about how my heart was broken, that I needed them back then. Tell them that I'm in love with someone fucking amazing. But I can't. They don't want to know. They can't hear. And can I sacrifice everything to lose them again, after only getting them back? Should I accept this as their way of dealing with it, or should I be militant and force them to confront it?

Confront this, their son.

I love my life.

I just wish they'd love it too.

BQ 

Chris Von Steiner

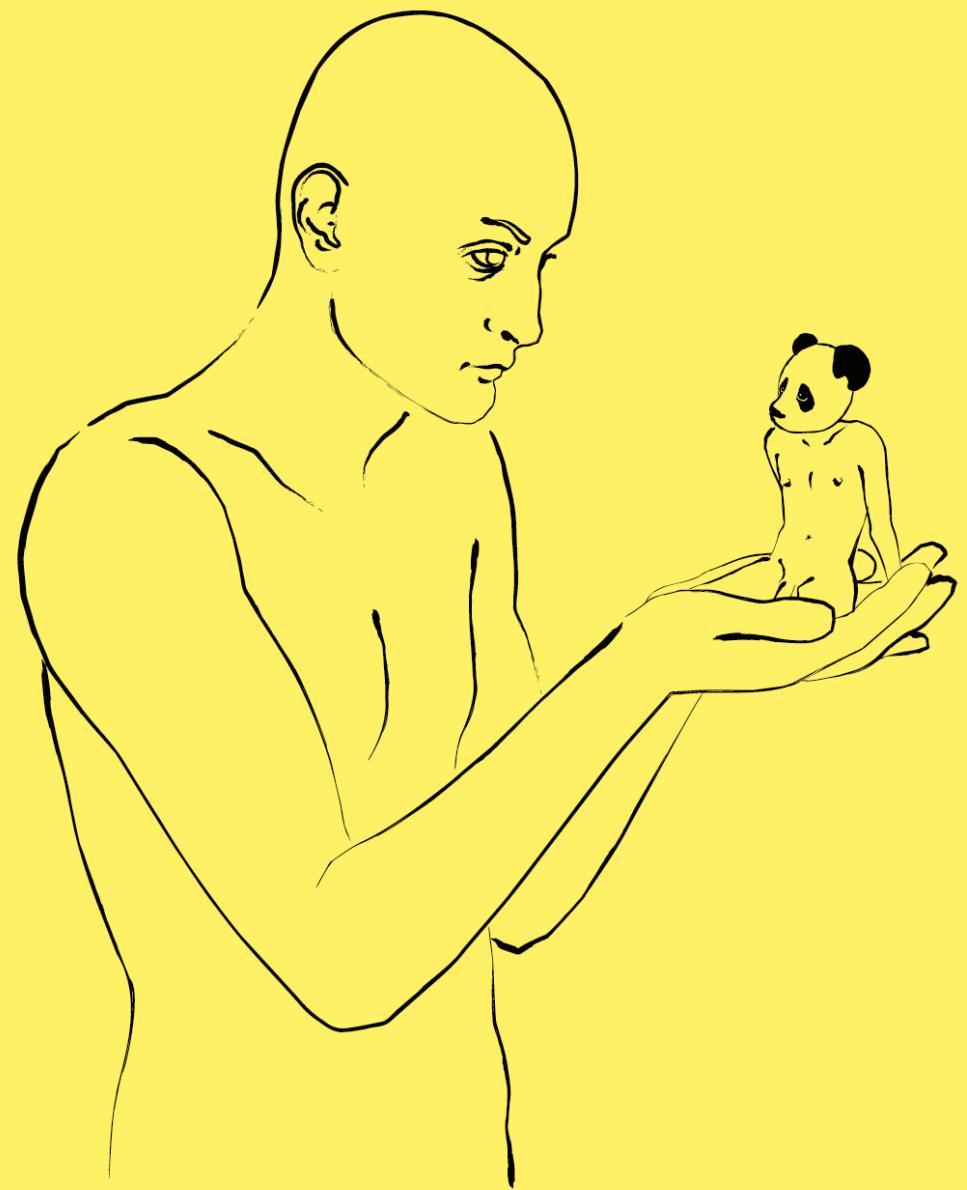
Digital artist Chris Von Steiner, without brush, paint or pen, but only a mouse, computer and a little help from Adobe Illustrator®, tells elegant boy-centric fables of freak show sexual depravity and fantastical devousness. Sitting alone in the dark in front of his computer he draws, samples, loops, and edits the darkest ruminations of the sick and tortured teenager he was and will likewise always remain. Like a pop star whose songs haunt both your mind and your pants, Von Steiner attempts to share with the world his most savage visions of both beauty and shadowy fear. A Parisian visual artist and writer, he is currently working and living in Brussels. He has published two novels in France and one in the USA in a collection assembled by Dennis Cooper. His digital paintings have been shown throughout Europe and the USA.

J. Winter, 2009



Check out his work
www.chrisvonsteiner.com

Above: 'Hustler' by Chris Von Steiner



Above: 'Say Hello Wave Goodbye' Right: 'Amnesiac' by Chris Von Steiner



Carry on Catholic...

Sean McCormack, a 26 year old veterinary student originally from Kilkenny tells us his story about leaving the Catholic Church.

What has the Catholic Church done for me? Besides feeding its messages of fear and guilt into the collective Irish consciousness over the past I don't know how many decades, in recent years they've made me angry. And I'm not alone. Ireland has shifted its attitudes somewhat and the church is consistently losing power and importance in everyday lives. Do I need to mention the horrific child abuse, Magdalene laundries,

unbaptised babies cast into unmarked graves, suicide victims facing a final rejection and stigmatisation of certain minorities? Some of that may be unimaginable to us modern queers, but it encapsulated the harsh reality of our parents' and grandparents' generations, forced to conform in the name of religion.

Excuse me while I re-check, but isn't the ideal of most religions based the same basic principle; love your fellow man? Ignoring the

obvious gay gag in that message, it's a good ideal to live your life by. Christ himself was apparently an idealist, promoting peace, love, compassion, not the hatred, intolerance and bile being issued by the big old Mary and his bitches in the Vatican these days.

My point is this: I'm angry because the Catholic Church is no longer a Christian organisation. And although it's trying to give up its dead baby-hating, child-molesting, loose women-imprisoning ways, the focus has turned to more pressing matters. It seems that contraception causes AIDS in Africa, and gays are a bigger threat to humanity than the destruction of the rainforests. Pearls of wisdom from the man at the top of the clerical heap, himself.

"why continue the fallacy of belonging to an organisation that is wholly irrelevant to your life?"

We've heard the absurdities before and most rational people agree Benny's a bit of a nut-job, but I can't help lament the grip the church still has on the Irish public. We were mostly born into Catholicism and it frustrates me to see it still going on. My sister and friends, like sheep, baptised their babies as the done thing. Are they raising their children 'to know and love God... Believe in the resurrection of Jesus... Renounce Satan and his works' as declared in their vows? Are they hell! That particular ceremony meant no more to them than a good day out and a celebration afterwards. And don't think for a minute that they'll deprive the kids of communion day with all the financial benefits that entails.

I know I'm being a cynic here, but why continue the fallacy of belonging to an organisation that is wholly irrelevant to your life? They do it because of tradition, and the very Irish excuse of "What would the neighbours think? We just have to carry on Catholic, sure where's the harm?"

For 'the gays' it's even more mind-boggling to belong to an organisation that hates and persecutes us. We complain whenever bigots use religion against us and feel hurt by the blatant hatred the Church spews, whether we like to admit it or not. I realise that those who still have faith in a God of some description derive peace

from their beliefs, which can be quite separate from their Catholicism. But I, for one, am no longer going to run in that flock.

The Lord is not my shepherd, there's plenty I shall want! I didn't give my consent to join an oppressive, hypocritical, fear-mongering establishment that seeks to control how I live my life, but I'm taking action on my own behalf now to get the fuck off their members list!

I made the decision I was no longer a practising Catholic years ago. The anti-gay messages and scandals of my church only served to push me further from their grasp. I describe myself as an Atheist and this is part of the reason I no longer want to belong. But not belonging is not enough. The outrage the Catholic Church sparked in me as a proud, valued homosexual has given me no other option but to renounce them as an organisation.

Therefore, I needed to formally defect. That particular task was made easy when I found a great website that sorted out the paperwork. I filled in a form; an automated letter was generated and sent to the Bishop. Did I spontaneously combust? Did I have to plead my case to a priestly panel? Did anyone say I would burn in hell for all eternity? Nope. The Bishop is "saddened" but respects my decision. The priest admires me, as too many "don't take their faith seriously". I told him it would be hypocritical of me to have a Catholic funeral with some priest I don't know from Adam saying what a good child of God I was, but also that I was gay. His nonchalant reply indicated that over half the clergy are gay and shouldn't listen to that buffoon over in Rome anyway.

Priest: "Sure, I find it hard myself to conform to all the rules they impose, especially the celibacy. And then he expects me to stand up and apologise for the evil and child abuse that was covered up before I was even ordained." He was wholly supportive of my decision and I left the conversation and ultimately the organisation without a shadow of doubt or guilt I was encouraged to feel as a child. Not before Father gave me his mobile number however, "in case you need to talk anytime". The sly dog! **BQ**

To extricate himself from the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), Sean used a website www.countmeout.ie. In three simple steps this site produces all the documentation you need to leave the RCC.

Left: 'ill Papa' illustration by Will St Leger

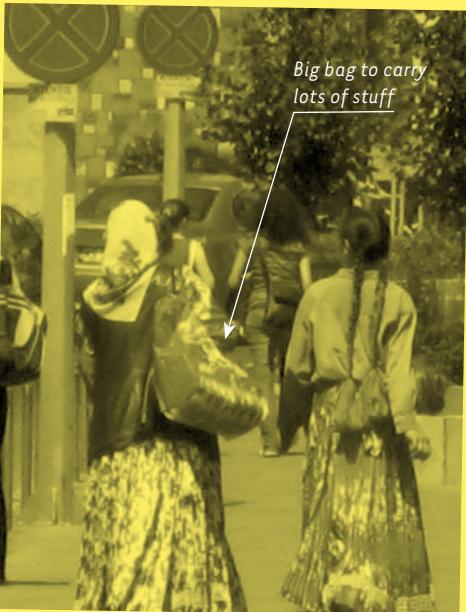


#1 The on-fire but seriously unattainable...

Roma Girls

What's to like?

1. Not really having any of you.
2. Laydee-like against the odds. Nice hair, pretty skirts. No-compromise.
3. Their punk rock 'get everything for free' ways. - bathe in their cultures of resistance aura. Never put your hand in your pocket.
4. Often travel in threes. Work the group.



What's not to like?

1. Not really having any of you. At all.
2. Secretly wanting you. But never letting it show when you chat them up outside The Stag's Head. What's up with the taboo shit? It's really coming between us.
3. The whole kid thing.
4. Rumours of hand jobs behind the Virgin Megastore. Plain discriminatory; I feel cheated-on.



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How to Explain Religion to your Child

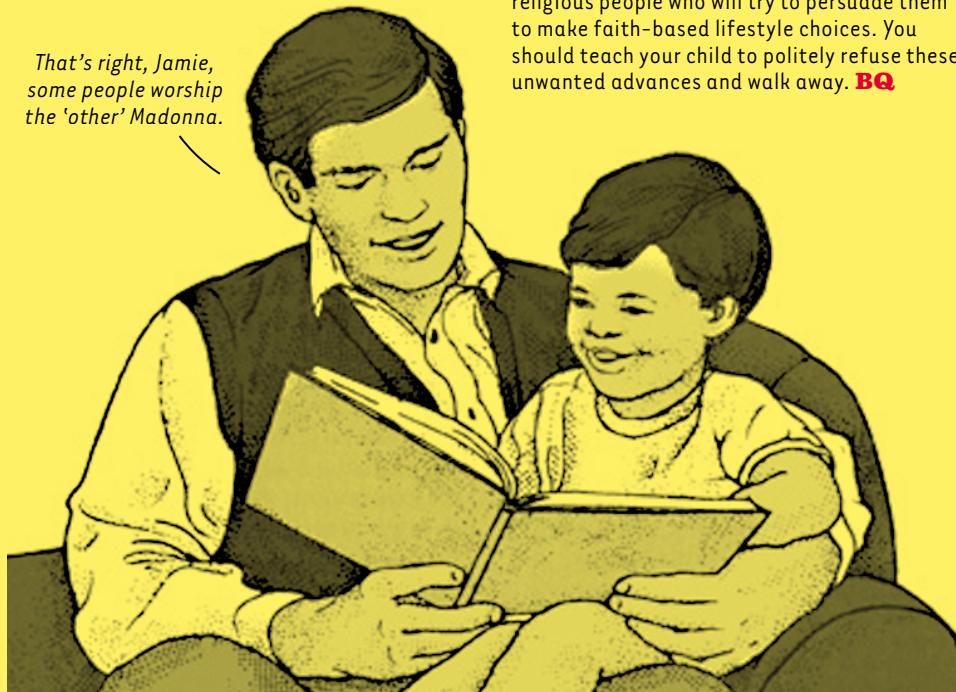
1 It's a lifestyle choice

Reassure your child that while being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender is perfectly natural, no one is born 'religious'. At some stage in their life, a person must be indoctrinated into a belief system and they choose to define themselves 'religious'. It's not all bad news, studies have shown that it's not unusual for a person to 'switch' religions during their lifetime or even become an atheist.

2 Teach them tolerance

Your child will have sceptical concerns regarding supernatural claims, citing a lack of empirical evidence of a supreme creator. This is normal, but it's important they understand that they shouldn't ridicule a religious person worshipping tree stumps, the garden of Eden or Tom Cruise.

*That's right, Jamie,
some people worship
the 'other' Madonna.*



3 They can be 'Darksided'

Your child should be aware that some religious people are sick bastards. Some clergy, such as Christian Brothers and Catholic priests, have used their power and access to sexually abuse children. Although these people are only a minority, they give other religious people a bad name.

4 They're very camp

Some religious ceremonies centre around flamboyant frocks, fast-tempo music and dancing, which are used to create hysteria and a feeling that you're in the presence of an invisible being. Tell your child this is just like being in a gay club with a straight friend.

5 Just say no.

During your child's life there will be times when he or she will be confronted by religious people who will try to persuade them to make faith-based lifestyle choices. You should teach your child to politely refuse these unwanted advances and walk away. **BQ**



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